

1549 n.
J E P H T H A,

A N

O R A T O R I O.

O R,

S A C R E D D R A M A.

As it is Perform'd at the

T H E A T R E - R O Y A L

I N

C O V E N T - G A R D E N.

Set to Mufick by Mr. H A N D E L.

L O N D O N:

Printed for J. W A T T S: And Sold by B. D O D at the *Bible and*
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~~PRINTED BY J. WATTS~~
[Price One Shilling.]

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

JEPHTHA.

ZEBUL, his Brother.

STORGE, his Wife.

IPHIS, his Daughter.

HAMOR, in love with *Iphis*.

Chorus of *Israelites*.



42

28

118



JEPHTHA.



J E P H T H A.

A

S A C R E D D R A M A.

P A R T I. S C E N E I.

ZEBUL, *with his Brethren, &c.*

R E C I T A T I V E.



I T must be so; or these vile *Ammonites*,
Our lordly Tyrants now these eighteen Years,
Will crush the Race of *Israël*. —
Since Heav'n vouchsafes not, with immediate Choice,
To point us out a Leader, as before,
Ourselves must choose.—And who so fit a Man
As *Gilead's* Son, our Brother, valiant *Jephtha*? —
True, we have slighted, scorn'd, expell'd him hence,
As of a Stranger born; but well I know him;
His generous Soul disdains a mean Revenge,
When his distressful Country calls his Aid. —
And, perhaps, God may favour our Request,
If with repentant Hearts we sue for Mercy.

A I R.

*No more pour forth unheeded Pray'rs
To Idols deaf, and vain:
No more with vile unhallow'd Airs,
The sacred Rites profane.*

A 2

CH O.

J E P H T H A

C H O R U S.

*No more to Ammon's God and King,
Fierce Moloch, shall our Cymbals ring,
In dismal Dance about the Furnace blue.*

*Chemosh no more
Will we adore,
With timbrell'd Anthems, to Jehovah due!*

S C E N E II.

Enter Jephtha, Storgè, &c.

R E C I T A T I V E.

Zebul. But *Jephtha* comes.—Kind Heav'n assist our Plea.
O *Jephtha*, with an Eye of Pity, look
On thy repentant Brethren in Distress.
Forgetful of thy Wrongs, redress thy Sire,
Thy Friends, thy Country, in extreme Despair.

Jephtha. I will: — so please it Heav'n; and these the Terms:
If I command in War, the like Command,
Should Heav'n vouchsafe us a victorious Peace,
Shall still be mine. —

Zebul. Agreed. — Be witness, Heaven.

A I R.

Jephtha. *Virtue my Soul shall still embrace;
Goodness shall make me great.
Who builds upon this steady Base,
Dreads no Event of Fate.*

R E C I T A T I V E.

Storgè. 'Twill be a painful Separation, *Jephtha*,
To see Thee harness'd for the bloody Field.
But ah! how trivial are a Wife's Concerns,

When

When a whole Nation bleeds, and groveling lies,
Panting for Liberty and Life.

A I R.

*In gentle Murmurs will I mourn,
As mourns the Mate-forsaken Dove;
And sighing wish thy dear Return
To Liberty, and lasting Love.*

[Exeunt.

S C E N E III.

Enter Hamor and Iphis.

RECITATIVE.

Hamor. Happy this Embassy, my charming *Iphis*,
Which once more gives thee to my longing Eyes.
As *Cynthia* breaking from long-darkning Clouds
On the benighted Traveller; the Sight
Of Thee, my Love, drives Darkness and Despair:
Again I live; in thy sweet Smiles I live;
As in thy Father's ever-watchful Care
Our wretched Nation feels new Life, new Joy.
O haste; and make my Happiness complete.

A I R.

*Dull Delay, in piercing Anguish,
Bids thy faithful Lover languish;
While he pants for Bliss in vain.
Oh! with gentle Smiles relieve me;
Let no more false Hope deceive me;
Nor vain Fears inflict a Pain.*

RECITATIVE.

Iphis. Ill suits the Voice of Love when Glory calls,
And

And bids thee follow *Jephtha* to the Field.
 Act there the Hero, and let rival Deeds
 Proclaim Thee worthy to be call'd his Son:
 And *Hamor* shall not want his due Reward.

A I R.

*Take the Heart you fondly gave;
 Lodg'd in your Breast with mine;
 Thus with double Ardour brave;
 Sure Conquest shall be thine.*

R E C I T A T I V E.

Hamor. I go; — My Soul inspir'd by thy Command,
 Thirsts for the Battel. — I'm already crown'd
 With the victorious Wreath; and Thou, fair Prize,
 More worth than Fame or Conquest, thou art mine.

D U E T.

*These Labours past, how happy we!
 How glorious will they prove!
 When gathering Fruit from Conquest's Tree
 We deck the Feast of Love!*

[Exeunt.]

S C E N E IV.

Jephtha alone.

R E C I T A T I V E.

What mean these doubtful Fancies of the Brain?
 Visions of Joy rise in my raptur'd Soul,
 There play awhile, and set in darksome Night.
 Strange Ardour fires my Breast; my Arms seem strung
 With tenfold Vigour, and my crested Helm
 To reach the Skies. — Be humble still, my Soul. —

It

*It is the Spirit of God; in whose great Name
I offer up my Vow. —*

RECITATIVE *accompany'd.*

If, Lord, sustain'd by thy almighty Pow'r,
Ammon I drive, and his insulting Bands,
From these our long-uncultivated Lands,
And safe return a glorious Conqueror; —
What, or who-e'er shall first salute mine Eyes,
Shall be for ever thine, or fall a Sacrifice. —

RECITATIVE.

'Tis said. —

Enter Israelites, &c.

— Attend ye Chiefs, and with one Voice,
Invoke the holy Name of *Israël's* God.

CHORUS.

O God, behold our sore Distress;
Omnipotent, to plague, or bless!
But turn thy Wrath, and bless once more
Thy Servants, who thy Name adore.

[Exeunt.]

S C E N E V.

Storgè, alone.

RECITATIVE.

“ Some dire Event hangs o'er our Heads,
Some woful Song we have to sing
In Misery extreme. — O, never, never
Was my foreboding Mind distress'd before
With such incessant Pangs. —

A I R.

J E P H T H A.

A I R.

*Scenes of Horror, Scenes of Woe,
Rising from the Shades below,
Add new Terror to the Night.
While in never-ceasing Pain,
That attends the servile Chain,
Joyless flow the Hours of Light.*

S C E N E VI.

Enter Iphis.

R E C I T A T I V E.

Iphis. “ Say, my dear Mother, whence these piercing Cries,
That force me, like a frightened Bird, to fly
My Place of Rest? —

Storgè. — “ For Thee I fear, my Child;
Such ghastly Dreams last Night surpris’d my Soul.

Iphis. Heed not these black Illusions of the Night,
The mocking of unquiet Slumbers, heed them not.
My Father, touch’d with a diviner Fire,
Already seems to triumph in Success,
Nor doubt I but *Jehovah* hears our Pray’rs.

A I R.

*The smiling Dawn of happy Days
Presents a Prospect clear;
And pleasing Hope’s all-bright’ning Rays
Dispel each gloomy Fear;
While every Charm that Peace displays,
Makes Spring-time all the Year.*

[Exeunt]
S C E N E

S C E N E VII.

Enter Zebul, Jephtha, &c.

R E C I T A T I V E.

Zebul. Such, *Jephtha*, was the haughty King's Reply. —
No Terms, — but Ruin, Slavery, and Death.

Jephtha. Sound then the last Alarm; — and to the Field,
Ye Sons of *Israel* with intrepid Hearts;
Dependent on the Might of *Israel's* God.

C H O R U S.

*“ When his loud Voice in Thunder spoke,
With conscious Fear the Billows broke,
Observant of his dread Command.
In vain they roll their foaming Tide;
Confin'd by the almighty Pow'r,
That gave them Strength to roar,
They now contract their boistrous Pride,
And lash with idle Rage the laughing Strand.*



P A R T II. S C E N E I.

Enter HAMOR, IPHIS, &c.

R E C I T A T I V E.

Hamor. **G**LAD Tidings of great Joy to Thee, dear *Iphis*,
And to the House of *Israël* I bring.
Thus then in brief. — Both Armies in Array
Of Battel rang'd, our General stept forth
And offer'd haughty *Ammon* Terms of Peace,
Most just and righteous; these with Scorn refus'd,

B

He

He bade the Trumpet sound : but scarce a Sword
 Was ting'd in hostile Blood, ere all around
 The thund'ring Heavens open'd, and pour'd forth
 Thousands of armed *Cherubim* : When strait
 Our General cried ; “ *This is thy Signal, Lord,*
 “ *I follow Thee, and thy bright heav'nly Host.*
 Then rushing on proud *Ammon*, all aghast,
 He made a bloody Slaughter, and pursued
 The flying Foe, till Night bade sheathe the Sword,
 And taste the Joys of Victory and Peace.

C H O R U S.

“ *Cherub and Seraphim, unbodied Forms,*
The Messengers of Fate,
God's dread Command await ;
Of swifter Flight, and subtler Frame,
Than Lightning's winged Flame,
They ride on Whirlwinds, and direct the Storms.

A I R. Hamor to Iphis.

Up the dreadful Steep ascending,
While for Love and Fame contending,
Sought I thee, my glorious Prize.
And now happy in the Blessing,
Thee, my sweetest Joy, possessing,
Other Honours I despise.

R E C I T A T I V E.

Iphis. 'Tis well. —

— *Haste, haste, ye Maidens, and in richest Robes,*
Adorn me, like a stately Bride, to meet
My Father in triumphant Pomp. —
And while around the dancing Banners play,

A I R.

J E P H T H A.

11

A I R.

*Tune the soft melodious Lute,
Pleasant Harp, and warbling Flute,
To Sounds of rapt'rous Joy.
Such as on our solemn Days,
Singing great Jehovah's Praise,
The holy Quire employ.*

[Exeunt.

S C E N E II.

Enter Zebul, Jephtha, Hamor, &c.

R E C I T A T I V E.

Zebul. Again Heav'n smiles on his repentant People;
And Victory spreads wide her silver Wings,
To sooth our Sorrows with a peaceful Calm.

A I R.

*Freedom now once more possessing,
Peace shall spread with ev'ry Blessing,
Triumphant Joy around:
Sion now no more complaining,
Shall, in blissful Plenty reigning,
Thy glorious Praise resound.*

R E C I T A T I V E.

Jephtha. Zebul, thy Deeds were valiant, nor less thine,
My Hamor, but the Glory is the Lord's.

A I R.

*His mighty Arm, with sudden Blow,
Dispers'd and quell'd the haughty Foe.
They fell before him, as when through the Sky,
He bids the sweeping Winds in Vengeance fly.*

B 2

C H O R U S.

J E P H T H A
C H O R U S.

*" In Glory high, in Might serene,
He sees, moves all, unmov'd, unseen.
His mighty Arm, with sudden Blow,
Dispers'd, and quell'd the haughty Foe.*

S C E N E III.

[Symphony.]

Enter Iphis, Storgè, &c.

*Iphis. Hail, glorious Conqueror! much-lov'd Father, hail!
Behold, thy Daughter and her Virgin Train,
Come to salute thee with all duteous Love.*

A I R.

*Welcome, as the chearful Light,
Driving darkest Shades of Night:
Welcome, as the Spring, that rains
Sweets, and Plenty o'er the Plains!
Not chearful Day,
Nor Spring so gay,
Such mighty Blessings brings,
As Peace on her triumphant Wings.*

Semichorus of Virgins.

*Welcome Thou, whose Deeds conspire
To provoke the warbling Lyre.
Welcome Thou, whom God ordain'd
Guardian Angel of our Land!
Thou wert born, his glorious Name,
And great Wonders to proclaim.*

RECITATIVE.

*Jephtha. Horror! Confusion! harsh this Music grates
Upon*

Upon my tasteless Ears—Be gone, my Child,
Thou hast undone thy Father.— Fly, be gone,
And leave me to the Rack of wild Despair. [*Exit. Iphis.*]

A I R.

“ *Open thy marble Jaws, O Tomb,
And hide me, Earth, in thy dark Womb:
Ere I the Name of Father stain,
And deepest Woe from Conquest gain.*

R E C I T A T I V E.

Zebul. Why is my Brother thus afflicted? say,
Why didst Thou spurn thy Daughter's Gratulations,
And fling her from Thee with unkind Disdain?

Jephtha. O *Zebul*, *Hamor*, and my dearest Wife,
Behold a wretched Man; —

Thrown from the Summit of presumptuous Joy,
Down to the lowest Depth of Misery. —

Know then, — I vow'd the first I saw thou'd fall
A Victim to the living God. — my Daughter —
Alas! it was my Daughter, and she dies.

R E C I T A T I V E *accompany'd.*

Storgè. First perish Thou; and perish all the World!
Hath Heav'n then bless'd us with this only Pledge
Of all our Love, this one dear Child, for Thee
To be her Murderer? — No, cruel Man;

A I R.

“ *Let other Creatures die;
Or Heav'n, Earth, Seas, and Sky
In one Confusion lie.*

Ere

J E P H T H A.

*Ere in a Daughter's Blood
So fair, so chaste, so good,
A Father's Hand's embrued.*

R E C I T A T I V E.

Hamor. If such thy cruel Purpose; lo! thy Friend
Offers himself a willing Sacrifice,
To save the innocent and beauteous Maid.

A I R.

*On me let blind mistaken Zeal
Her utmost Rage employ.
'Twill be a Mercy there to kill,
Where Life can taste no Joy.*

Q U A R T E T T O.

Zebul. O spare thy Daughter. —

Storgè.

— Spare my Child,

Hamor.

— my Love.

Jephtha. Recorded stands my Vow in Heav'n above.

Storgè. Recal the impious Vow, ere 'tis too late.

Hamor. } And think not God delights

Zebul. } In Moloch's horrid Rites.

Jephtha. I'll hear no more; her Doom is fix'd as Fate.

S C E N E IV.

Enter Iphis.

R E C I T A T I V E.

Iphis. Swift flies such News; I've heard the mournful Cause
Of all your Sorrows. — Of my Father's Vow
Heav'n spoke its Approbation by Success:
Gilead hath triumph'd, — *Israël* is free.

R E C I -

RECITATIVE *accompany'd.*

For Joys so vast, too little is the Price
Of one poor Life. — but oh! accept it, Heav'n,
A grateful Victim, and thy Blessings still
Pour on my Country, Friends, and dearest Father!

A I R.

*Happy they; this vital Breath
With Content I shall resign;
And not murmur, or repine,
Sinking in the Arms of Death.*

RECITATIVE *accompany'd.*

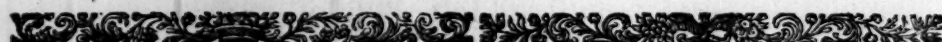
Jephtha. Deeper and deeper still, thy Goodness, Child,
Pierceth a Father's bleeding Heart, and checks
The cruel Sentence on my salt'ring Tongue.
Oh! let me whisper it to the raging Winds,
Or howling Deserts; for the Ears of Men
It is too shocking. — Yet — have I not vow'd?
And can I think the great *Jehovah* sleeps,
Like *Chemosh*, and such fabled Deities?
No, no; Heav'n heard my Thoughts, and wrote them down. —
It must be so. — 'Tis This that racks my Brain,
And pours into my Breast a thousand Pangs,
That lash me into Madness. — Horrid Thought! —
My only Daughter! — and so dear a Child,
Doom'd by a Father! — Yes, — the Vow is past,
And *Gilead* hath triumph'd o'er his Foes. —
Therefore, to-morrow's Dawn — I can no more.

CHORUS.

J E P H T H A.

C H O R U S.

*How dark, O Lord, are thy Decrees!
 All hid from mortal Sight!
 All our Joys to Sorrow turning,
 And our Triumphs into Mourning,
 As the Night succeeds the Day.
 No certain Bliss,
 No solid Peace,
 We Mortals know,
 On Earth below;
 Yet on this Maxim still obey;
 Whatever is, is right.*



P A R T III. S C E N E I.

J E P H T H A, I P H I S, Priests, &c.

RECITATIVE *accompany'd.*

J E P H T H A.

HIDE thou thy hated Beams, O Sun, in Clouds,
 And Darkness, deep as is a Father's Woe:

RECITATIVE.

A Father, offering up his only Child
 In vow'd Return for Victory and Peace.

A I R.

*Waft her, Angels, through the Skies,
 Far above yon azure Plain;
 Glorious there, like you, to rise,
 There, like you for ever reign.*

RECITATIVE

R E C I T A T I V E.

Iphis. Ye sacred Priests, whose Hands ne'er yet were stain'd
 With human Blood, why are ye thus afraid
 To execute my Father's Will? — The Call
 Of Heav'n, (for sure it is the Call of Heav'n,)
 With humble Resignation I obey.

A I R.

*Farewel, ye limpid Springs and Floods,
 Te flow'ry Meads, and mazy Woods;
 Farewel, thou busy World, where reign
 Short Hours of Joy, and Tears of Pain.
 Brighter Scenes I seek above,
 In the Realms of Peace and Love.*

Chorus of Priests.

*Doubtful Fear, and reverent Awe
 Strike us, Lord, while here we bow:
 Check'd by thy all-sacred Law,
 Yet commanded by the Vow.
 In this Distress, Lord, hear our Pray'r,
 And thy determin'd Will declare.*

[Symphony.]

R E C I T A T I V E.

Angel. Rise, *Jephtha*, --- And, ye reverend Priests, withhold
 The slaughterous Hand. — No Vow can disannul
 The Law of God. — Nor such was its Intent
 When rightly scann'd; — and yet shall be fulfill'd. —
 Thy Daughter, *Jephtha*, thou must dedicate
 To God, in pure and Virgin-state for ever,

C

As

J E P H T H A.

As not an Object meet for Sacrifice,
Else had she faln an Holocaust to God.
The Holy Spirit, that dictatèd thy Vow,
Bade thus explain it, and approves your Faith.

A I R.

*Happy, Iphis, shalt thou live;
While to thee the Virgin Choir
Tune their Harps of golden Wire,
And their yearly Tribute give.*

*Happy, Iphis, all thy Days,
(Pure, angelic, Virgin-state,)
Shalt thou live; and Ages late
Crown thee with immortal Praise.*

RECITATIVE accompany'd.

Jephtha. For ever blessed be thy holy Name,
Lord God of Israel! —

C H O R U S.

*Theme sublime of endless Praise,
Just and righteous are thy Ways;
And thy Mercies still endure,
Ever faithful, ever sure.*

S C E N E II.

Enter Zebul, Storgè, Hamor, &c.

RECITATIVE.

Zebul. Let me congratulate this happy Turn,
My honour'd Brother, Judge of Israël;

Thy

J E P H T H A.

19

Thy Faith, thy Courage, Constancy and Truth,
Nations shall sing; and in their just Applause,
All join to celebrate thy Daughter's Name.

A I R.

*Laud her, all ye Virgin Train,
In glad Songs of choicest Strain:
Ye blest Angels all around,
Laud her in melodious Sound:
Virtues, that to you belong,
Love, and Truth demand the Song.*

RECITATIVE *accompany'd.*

Hamor. With Transport, *Iphis*, I behold thy Safety.
But must for ever mourn so dear a Loss:
Dear, tho' great *Jephtha* were to honour me
Still with the Name of Son. ----

Iphis.

Iphis. My faithful *Hamor*, may that Providence
Which gently claims, or forceth our Submission,
Direct thee to some happier Choice. ---

D U E T T O.

Iphis. *All that is in Hamor mine,*
Freely I to Heaven resign.

Hamor. *All that is in Iphis mine,*
Freely I to Heaven resign.

Iphis. *Duteous to the Will supreme,*
Still my Hamor I'll esteem.

Hamor. *Duteous to Almighty Pow'r,*
Still my Iphis I'll adore.

Both. { *Joys triumphant crown thy Days,*
 And thy Name eternal Praise.

Jephtha. { *Joys triumphant crown thy Days,*
Storgè. { *And thy Name eternal Praise.*
Zebul.

C H O R U S.

Ye House of Gilead, with one Voice,
In Blessings manifold rejoice,
Freed from War's destructive Sword:
Peace her Plenty 'round shall spread,
While in Virtue's Path ye tread.
So blest are they who fear the Lord.

Hallelujah.



